

## March Patriotic Instruction

Brothers,

Over the past year we as an order have been given trials and tribulations the likes we have never seen. It is easy, in difficult times, to look internally and to find something, or someone, to find issue with and to lash out. It is more important to remember the words President Lincoln said during his failed attempt to run for U.S. Senate in 1858 "A house divided against itself cannot stand". These words have never been more true during this time as we see friends, families and even Brothers of the Order fighting each other over a various number of topics.

As members of the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War we are all passionate about how to memorialize those brave men who fought to preserve the Union. We must remember that we all have valid ideas to bring to the table and that we need to be able to listen to all ideas. This also means we need to be able to listen to counter proposals or tweaks to our own ideas and realize that they are not coming from a place of hatred or contempt, but rather a place of betterment. As I was told growing up, the only stupid idea or question is the unspoken one.

This thought process goes hand in hand with issues we come across in our day to day life. Whether it be work, school or community issues, we need to be able to feel confident that we can speak our mind as well as be able to listen to those whose views and values are not the same as ours. No one person has an answer to all of the world's problems, being able to listen to each other is vital to being able to move forward. On the flip side of the, we need to be able to be approachable when we are making our propositions and pushing our ideas. If a person does not feel as if they can present their counter ideas, the situation cannot proceed forward. In other words, we need to work together to move forward.

The idea of working together and being able to proceed forward and make this Country, our states, our towns, our neighborhoods and our Order better is one of the biggest virtues of Patriotism. We must not sit complacent, we must always strive to be better, but we must work together to do so. As historians we must always remember there are always three versions of the truth, what I said happened, what You said happened and what actually happened, this is no different with trying to find solutions to issues at hand, whether that issue is how to raise a head stone, teach a class or plan a food drive. Work together, Brothers, and we will succeed in our mission and in doing so our Order and our Country will flourish.

In Fraternity Charity and Loyalty,  
Br. Ben Frail, PDC  
National Patriotic Instructor